

# The Face of Global Trade: Tacoma Community College

International trade is often most associated with imports and exports of goods between countries. While this is correct, it does not begin to represent the extent of trade. Trade is a visitor from Japan attending a Mariners game to watch Ichiro. Trade is treating a cancer patient from Brazil at one of the region's premier research and medical centers. Trade is buying a cup of coffee from your local cafe or attending a screening of a Korean film.

And trade is training international students at our region's universities and community colleges.

Like many of the region's higher education institutions, Tacoma Community College admits on average over 200 international students each quarter out of a student body of 9,000. These students hail from approximately 30 countries worldwide, with the largest concentrations of students coming from Japan, Korea and Hong Kong. In fact, international students add more than \$240 million to Washington State's economy each year.

## International Success

Tacoma Community College (TCC) offers programs both for international students and students looking to be involved internationally. International students provide a significant source of revenue to the school since they pay out of state tuition. In fact, training and educating international students is an export for schools such as TCC.

International students at TCC can choose from

**Name:** Tacoma Community College  
**Location:** Tacoma, Pierce County  
**International Students:** Average of 225 each quarter  
**Countries represented:** About 30 countries each year, with a large number from Japan, Korea and Hong Kong  
**Puget Sound Enabler:** Breadth and depth of trade-related organizations, cultural diversity



over sixty academic majors for students planning on transferring to a four-year university, forty certificate and degree programs in professional-technical areas and English language programs. The school maintains relations with international alumni, many of

whom have risen to prominence in their fields. For example, a recent graduate is a landscape architect working at the new Hong Kong Disneyland. Another is a university professor in

Jakarta, Indonesia, and another is a product design artist in Tokyo. These students credit their U.S. degree, understanding of American customs and fluency in English as major contributors to their professional advancement.

In addition to programs in Tacoma for international students, the school promotes its English Conversation Partner Program where an international student and American student are paired for informal conversation and cultural exchange, and the school offers quarter-long study abroad programs in Costa Rica, Italy and England.

## Why Puget Sound?

As the most trade dependent region in the United States, offering programs for international students at our universities and community colleges not only provides revenue through tuition and spending in the local economy, but it pays long-term dividends through the connections that international students make with the people they meet. Students who spend a significant amount of time studying here are more likely to turn to the relationships they have cultivated for future business endeavours. The same can be said for the study abroad programs.

Increased international involvement has also been a driver for sister school relationships, stronger sister city ties and increased revenues through grants to support international programs. All of these increase the international awareness that students need to successfully compete in the global economy.